

# MEDICAREMATTERS

Volume 2 / Issue 2

A Publication by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

Summer 2005

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## "MEDICARE COVERS AMERICA" RALLY



June 16, 2005, marked a significant day for Medicare, as **President Bush**, joined by Health and Human Services **Secretary Mike Leavitt** and CMS Administrator

**Dr. Mark McClellan**, hosted a "**Medicare Covers America**" kickoff rally at the Hubert Humphrey Federal Building in Washington, D.C. The rally launched a new stage in the national effort to get comprehensive drug coverage to the more than 42 million people with Medicare who need help paying for their prescription drugs.

Medicare is partnering with many state and local organizations, as well as patient advocacy groups, to launch a national grassroots education campaign to give people with Medicare good information and good advice about Medicare's new drug coverage before it takes effect on January 1, 2006. This new coverage is available to everyone with Medicare, and includes brand-name and generic drugs. Extra help is also available for those with limited income and resources.

President Bush said in his speech, "The federal government will work hard to ensure that Medicare beneficiaries understand their options. I've asked every agency that touches the lives of seniors or disabled Americans to devote resources to explaining the prescription drug benefit. And we need the help of people in the private sector, as well. The only way to reach everyone on Medicare is to mobilize compassionate citizens in communities all over the country. Over the next 11 months, we will unite a wide range of Americans—from doctors, to nurses, to pharmacists, to state and local leaders, to seniors groups, to disability advocates, to faith-based organizations. Together, we will work to ensure that every American on Medicare is ready to make a confident choice about prescription drug coverage, so they can finally receive the modern health care they deserve."



For outreach resource materials and partner information, please visit the "Partner Center" at: <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/partnerships/>.

## NATIONAL SHIP CONFERENCE

**CMS Administrator Dr. Mark McClellan** stressed the importance of **State Health**

**Insurance Assistance Programs (SHIPs)** and community-based partners working together to reach and enroll people with Medicare into Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage as part of the **“Medicare Covers America”** effort during his May 23 speech to the 11th Annual SHIP Conference in Annapolis, MD. All 54 state SHIP programs and several counselors from the 1,300 community-based local SHIP programs joined together to become better prepared for their role of providing personalized counseling and enrollment assistance to people with Medicare during the enrollment process for Medicare prescription drug coverage.

During the course of the conference, CMS provided extensive training on various elements of Medicare prescription drug coverage, and also provided SHIP staff with insight on the education campaign structure and strategies. Both SHIP and CMS staff members who attended the conference expressed appreciation for the value of the information and enhanced communication opportunities that the conference provided.

While Dr. McClellan emphasized the importance of the role of SHIPs, both he and many of the SHIP directors in attendance expressed their recognition that SHIPs will need to partner with thousands of other community-based organizations to reach people with Medicare and enroll them in the drug plan of their choice.

For more information about the SHIP program or to find contact information to allow you to partner with the SHIP program in your community, visit the SHIP web site at: <http://www.SHIPTalk.org>.



### COVERAGE CLIPBOARD

## CMS FACILITATES ACCESS TO INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGY: INTRAOCULAR LENSES

In a ruling announced in May 2005 by **CMS Administrator Dr. Mark B. McClellan**, CMS

clarified its payment rules to present people with Medicare with the choice to receive **presbyopia-correcting intraocular lenses (IOLs)** that not only replace lenses clouded by cataracts but also allows the eye to focus on near, intermediate, and far vision, minimizing the need for corrective lenses.

Prior to this ruling, limitations on Medicare payment prevented individuals from receiving these lenses. Now people with Medicare who choose to purchase this additional feature will be able to do so.

This ruling clarifies that an individual may request insertion of a presbyopia-correcting IOL in place of a conventional IOL following cataract surgery. In this case, the presbyopia-correcting IOL device and associated services for fitting one lens are considered partially covered by Medicare. The person with Medicare is responsible for payment of that portion of the charge for the presbyopia-correcting IOL and associated services that exceed the charge for insertion of a conventional IOL following cataract surgery. For more information, see the CMS web site at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/rulings/>.



# OBTAINING EXTRA HELP FOR DRUG COVERAGE

At a news briefing held on June 1, 2005, CMS launched a major outreach effort to ensure that people with Medicare with limited income and resources know that they can get extra help paying for Medicare prescription drug coverage. The following web sites provide up-to-date information for those with limited income and resources.



- Fact Sheets/Tip Sheets/Mailings/Other Publications in English and Spanish  
<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/medicarereform/factsheets.asp>
- Guidance to States on the Limited-Income Subsidy  
<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/medicarereform/guidance5-25-05.pdf> (345 KB)
  - CMS Issue Paper: Additional Help to Those Who Need it Most: Those with High Drug Costs and Those with Low Incomes  
[http://www.cms.hhs.gov/medicarereform/issuepapers/title1and2/files/issue\\_paper\\_03\\_-\\_additional\\_help\\_to\\_those\\_who\\_need\\_it\\_most.pdf](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/medicarereform/issuepapers/title1and2/files/issue_paper_03_-_additional_help_to_those_who_need_it_most.pdf) (27 KB)
  - Key Projected Dates for Beneficiaries with Limited Income and Resources  
[http://www.cms.hhs.gov/medicarereform/key\\_dates\\_for\\_beneficiaries\\_with\\_lower\\_incomes.pdf](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/medicarereform/key_dates_for_beneficiaries_with_lower_incomes.pdf) (38 KB)
  - A Strategy for Transitioning Dual Eligibles from Medicaid to Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage—April 25, 2005  
<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/medicarereform/strategyforduals.pdf> (278 kb)
  - Materials from a HHS News Briefing to Raise Awareness about the Drug Benefit and Extra Help Available for Beneficiaries with Limited Income and Resources (Medicare Prescription Drug Calendar, Fact Sheet on Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage Basics, and a sample SSA Application Form) [Web Page]  
<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/medicarereform/help.asp>

## MEDLEARN MATTERS

The fourth in a series of Medlearn Matters articles on the new **Medicare prescription drug coverage** was released on June 3, 2005. “New Educational Products Available” describes an upcoming mailing to people with Medicare, as well as new educational products/tools available to providers regarding drug coverage.

Another Medlearn Matters article was released on Friday, July 1, 2005. “More Web-based Educational Products Available on Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage—The Fifth in the Medlearn Matters Series” describes new fact sheets and other educational resources available on: <http://www.medicare.gov>.

Visit <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/medlearn/drugcoverage.asp> to view the articles and other drug coverage resources for providers.

## PARTNER CENTER UPDATE

The partnership web site on [cms.hhs.gov](http://www.cms.hhs.gov) has been improved and has a completely new look. The content and navigation has been enhanced providing new ways to find partner information. With this new upgrade, the partnership web site has become a “**Partner Center.**” It will be the central resource point for all CMS partners and the central Internet presence for CMS partnerships and regional contact lists. Visit <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/partnerships> for information.

For REACH information, please go to “**Partner Center Communities**” at the top of the page and click on REACH Partnerships. **Medicare Matters** is now located on this site.

## CMS WEB SITE FOR PHARMACIES

CMS is pleased to announce a new tool that will assist both pharmacists and people with Medicare with the new Medicare prescription drug coverage. Created by pharmacists for pharmacists and pharmacies, there is a wealth of information at the new CMS Pharmacy website: <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/medicarerereform/pharmacy>. The CMS Pharmacy web site will provide information and guidance on topics important and specific to pharmacy, such as Part B versus Medicare prescription drug coverage issues, formulary and transition information, medication therapy management issues and much more. Special-practice pharmacies, including long-term care pharmacies, will find specific information on how Medicare prescription drug coverage will impact their practices. Also, the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) section provides answers to commonly asked questions about Medicare prescription drug coverage.



## HOSPITAL COMPARE: A TOOL THAT MEASURES QUALITY AND PERFORMANCE

**Hospital Compare** was created through the efforts of the **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)** and organizations that represent hospitals, doctors, employers, accrediting organizations, other Federal agencies, and the public. People with Medicare can talk to their doctor about this information to help them, their family, and their friends make their best hospital care decisions. Please visit <http://www.hospitalcompare.hhs.gov/hospital/home2.asp>.

## 3rd NATIONAL PREVENTION SUMMIT: INNOVATIONS IN COMMUNITY PREVENTION

**Secretary of Health and Human Services Mike Leavitt** invites you to attend the 3rd National Prevention Summit on October 24–25, 2005, at the Hyatt Regency on Capitol Hill, Washington DC. The Summit will focus on chronic disease prevention and health promotion and will feature innovative prevention programs that are making a difference in communities across the country. A special emphasis this year will be placed on health promotion and disease prevention for older Americans and on the use of health literacy and information technology to promote prevention. Secretary Leavitt will announce the winners of this year's **Innovation in Prevention Awards** at the Summit luncheon.



To register for the Summit online go to <http://www.healthierus.gov/steps/summit/exitRegister.html>.



# WEB SITE UPDATES

## **Preferred Terms** [PDF]

<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/partnerships/tools/materials/preferredterms.pdf>

To keep our messages clear and consistent, use this list of terminology, which contains specific language about Medicare prescription drug coverage that resonates well with people with Medicare. *Please bookmark this page as it will be updated often.*

## **Partner Center on CMS.gov** [Web Page]

<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/partnerships/news/mma/>

Get the latest MMA and Medicare prescription drug coverage information. *Please bookmark this page as it will be updated often.*

## **Brochure: "It's All Coming Together. Introducing Medicare Rx"** [Pub. #11142]

<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/medicarereform/11142IntroMed%20Rx.pdf>

A new publication describing the prescription drug plan.

## **Brochure: "Medicare Rx Prescription Drug Coverage"** [Pub. #11141]

<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/medicarereform/DrugCovisavailEnglish.pdf>

A new tri-fold describing the benefits and important dates regarding the prescription drug plan.

## **Brochure: "Medicare Rx Prescription Drug Coverage (Spanish)"** [Pub. #11141-S]

<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/medicarereform/DrugCovisavailSpanish.pdf>

A new tri-fold describing the benefits and important dates regarding the prescription drug plan, written in Spanish.

## **Two Pharmacy Presentations**

<http://cmsnet.cms.hhs.gov/projects/mmcomm/psi/presentations.asp>

Presentations dated June 29, 2005, regarding extra help paying for prescription drugs.

## **CMS Website for Retiree Drug Subsidy (RDS)** [Web Page]

<http://rds.cms.hhs.gov/>

The RDS Center web site is a "one-stop shop" for employer and union plan sponsors and other interested parties seeking information about the retiree drug subsidy program created pursuant to the Medicare Modernization Act (MMA). The RDS Center web site currently provides general information about the program, upcoming outreach events, E-news, and links to related regulations and other guidance. It will be updated over the next few weeks to include specific instructions and assistance regarding the RDS application and data submission processes.

## **Draft—Coordination of Benefits Guidelines** [PDF]

<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/pdps/draftcobguidance060705.pdf>

This **draft** document provides proposed guidance to potential Medicare prescription drug plan sponsors regarding CMS requirements and procedures for the coordination of benefits (COB) between Medicare prescription drug coverage, State Pharmaceutical Assistance Programs (SPAPs), and other providers of prescription drug coverage with respect to the payment of premiums and coverage, as well as payment for supplemental prescription drug benefits.

## **State Medicaid Director's Letter** [PDF]

<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/states/letters/smd060305.pdf>

On June 3, 2005, CMS issued a letter that explains the requirements in Federal law for coverage of these excluded drugs and asks state Medicaid programs that cover these excluded drugs to consider continuing this coverage for all Medicaid recipients, including full benefit dual eligibles, after the transition of dual eligibles to Medicare drug coverage.

## **2006 Bidding Guidance for Employer/Union Direct Contract PDPs and Part C and Part D Plans Offering Employer-only Group Plans** [PDF]

<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/medicarereform/pdbma/EmpBidGdnceFINAL.pdf>

The purpose of this guidance is to provide information for the bidding process to Employer/Union Direct Contract prescription drug plans, Part C, and Medicare prescription drug plans offering Employer only Group Plans. This guidance highlights any differences in the bidding process for these entities.



**[www.cms.hhs.gov](http://www.cms.hhs.gov)**  
**[www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov)**

## Happenings

### AUGUST

National Pain  
Awareness Month  
[www.painconnection.org/  
NationalPain  
Awareness/  
default.asp](http://www.painconnection.org/NationalPainAwareness/default.asp)

**1** National Minority  
Donor Awareness  
Day  
1-800-393-2839  
[www.national  
mottep.org](http://www.nationalmottep.org)

**7-12** National Health  
Center Week  
[www.health  
centerweek.com](http://www.healthcenterweek.com)

### SEPTEMBER

Healthy Aging  
Month  
[www.healthyaging.  
net](http://www.healthyaging.net)

National Cholesterol  
Education Month  
[www.nhlbi.nih.gov](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov)

**20** Take a Loved One  
to the Doctor Day  
1-800-444-6472  
[www.healthgap.  
omhrc.gov](http://www.healthgap.omhrc.gov)

### OCTOBER

Healthy Lung  
Month  
1-800-586-4872  
[www.lungusa.org](http://www.lungusa.org)

**21** National  
Mammography Day  
1-800-227-2345  
[www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)

**24-25** 3rd National  
Prevention Summit  
Hyatt Regency  
Capitol Hill  
Washington, DC

**MEDICARE MATTERS**  
*published quarterly by the  
Centers for Medicare &  
Medicaid Services*  
CMS Headquarters  
7500 Security Blvd.  
Baltimore, MD 21244-1850